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STATE FOR DIRECTOR GENERAL
STATE FOR M/R
STATE FOR L/DL
WHA/EX FOR JAMES ROBERTSON
HR/CDA FOR JOANNE ALBA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [APER](#) [ODIP](#) [AODE](#) [AMGT](#) [KLIQ](#)

SUBJECT: VULNERABILITY OF FRC REGIONAL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

1.(U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph five.

2.(SBU) Regionalization, while an important cost-saving measure, may create a vulnerability for the Department and disadvantage those officers providing regional support from a home base within the United States.

3.(SBU) Recently six Embassy Georgetown direct hire American employees, comprising the Management Officer, DCM, Peace Corps Country Director and Administrative Officer, and two members of the grievance committee for locally employed staff, received summons to appear in Guyanese court in relation to a wrongful termination lawsuit brought by a former Peace Corps local employee. Fortunately, all officers (except for one whose assignment had ended) named in the suit were immune. While the Regional Human Resources Officer, based at the Florida Regional Center, was not named in the suit, she very well could have been. As a U.S.-based regional officer she is not an accredited member of the mission staff and does not have immunity. Had she been named in the suit, the Department would have been drawn into defending the suit.

4.(SBU) Post has found FRC's human resources and financial management regional support to be invaluable, but this incident reveals one of the pitfalls of utilizing regional officers based within the United States--those officers do not have diplomatic immunity for duties performed at post. These officers visit post on average one week out of every two months. Even when they are not at post, they continue to function as "our" HR and B&F officers via telephone and e-mail. The functions they perform, especially in the case of human resources, can be contentious and lead to lawsuits. Regional personnel based outside of the United States, such as DEA and FBI agents based in Trinidad, are accredited in Guyana and do not face this vulnerability.

5.(SBU) The Department seeks immunities for personnel overseas primarily to protect U.S. national interests by insulating our personnel from pressure by host governments. Post asks that the Director General request a review to determine whether any possibility exists for accreditation of U.S.-based regional personnel, or alternative solutions that would provide similar protection of U.S. interests.

ROBINSON